

without the Senate's consent. It declared and managed wars. It received ambassadors and made alliances. And certainly, for over a hundred years, by its sagacity and energy, this "assembly of kings" justified its usurpation, earning Mommsen's epithet, - "the foremost political corporation of all time."

## C265BC GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

### THE SENATE

Indirectly, the Senate had been made elective. The censors were required to fill vacancies in that body first from those who had held curule offices, and ordinarily this left them little choice. The senatorial veto upon the Assemblies, too, had been taken away. So far as written law was concerned, the Senate was only an advisory body.

None the less it was really the guiding force in the government. It contained the wisdom and experience of Rome. The pressure of constant and

dangerous wars, and the growing complexity of foreign relations even in peace, made it inevitable that this far-seeing, compact, experienced body should assume authority which in theory belonged to the clumsy, inexperienced Assembly. "Rome," says Osborn, "became a complete aristocracy with democratic forms; or, as Mommsen puts it, 'While the burgesses [citizens] acquired the semblance, the Senate acquired the substance, of power.'

Each magistrate expected, after his brief term of office, to become permanently a member of the Senate. Therefore he guarded its dignity and dreaded its anger. Thus, as the magistrates controlled the Assembly, so the Senate controlled the magistrates. No consul would think of bringing a law before the people without the previous approval of the Senate (so that indirectly that body, rather than the Assembly, had become the real legislature.)

As a last resort, it could usually count upon one or more of the 10 tribunes, and could block any action it disliked by his veto. No officer could draw money from the treasury

↑ 265 BC

## GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

### DEMOCRATIC THEORY AND ARISTOCRATIC PRACTICE -

In theory the Democracy was supreme its popular Assemblies. In practice the Aristocrats controlled the government through their monopoly of the curule offices and of the all-directing Senate.

This condition began before the Pyrrhic War, or about 300 BC, and it lasted nearly 300 years. During the first part of this time (until about 200 BC) the rule of the nobles, though marked



sometimes by a narrow, close spirit, was patriotic, vigorous, and beneficent. After the year 200, it became both weak and selfish.

Then power slipped from the incapable aristocracy into the hands of military chiefs, - the forerunners of the Empire

C265BC

## THE ROMAN ARMY

THE ROMAN CAMP was characteristic of a people whose colonies were garrisons. Where the army encamped - even if for only a single night - there grew up in an hour a fortified city, with earth walls and regular streets. This system allowed the Romans often "to conquer by sitting still," declining or giving battle at their own option; while, too, when they did fight, they did so "under the walls of their city," with a fortified and guarded refuge in their rear.

## DISCIPLINE

The terrible discipline of early Rome remained. Without trial, the general could scourge or behead any man serving in his camp. Still more fearful was the practice of decimating a faulty corps (putting to death every tenth man).

the commander's term, under the title of proconsul. This office was destined to become the strongest force in the Republic and a chief step toward the coming Empire.

C265BC

## THE ROMAN ARMY

CHANGES WITH EXTENSION OF SERVICE;  
A PROFESSIONAL ARMY; PROCONSULS

Rome now began a long series of great wars waged for the most part, outside Italy. Great changes resulted in the army. Service with the legions long remained the highest duty of the citizen, and each man between the ages of 17 and 46 was liable to active duty. But alongside this citizen army, there was to grow up a professional army. New citizen legions



were raised each year for the summer campaigns, as before, though more and more, even in these legions, the officers were veterans and were becoming a professional class; but the legions sent to Sicily, Spain, or Africa were kept under arms sometimes for many yrs.

(In particular, the long struggle in Spain during the war with Hannibal and after it operated in this way. 20,000 soldiers were required for that province so. yrs for  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a century. There soon grew up a practice of setting such veterans upon the expiration of their service, in military colonies in the provinces where they had served - the lands thus given them being regarded as a kind of service pension. In this way communities of Roman citizens were to be spread over the provinces, to Italianize the world, as a like system of colonization had already Romanized Italy.)

Such facts led to another change, with important political consequences. To call home a consul each year from an unfinished campaign in these distant wars became intolerably wasteful. The remedy was found in prolonging the



## C 265 GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

THE OFFICERS OR CHIEF DIGNITY, from least to greatest were: —

AEDILES (2) with oversight over police and public works;

PRÆTORS (2), with the chief judicial power;

CONSULS (2), commanders in war and leaders in foreign policy;

CENSORS (2)

DIKTATOR (1), in critical times only

These five were called curule officers, because the holders, dividing among them the old

royal power, kept the right to use the curule chair - the ivory "throne" of the old king. There were also the two inferior AEDILES, the eight QUAESTORS (in charge of the treasury and with some judicial power) and the aedile tribunes. This last office, though less in dignity than the curule office, was perhaps most important of all. The tribune's old duties were gone; but he had become a political leader, and he kept his tremendous power of veto.

Except the censor, these officers held authority for only one year (the dictator for only a half-year), but they exercised great power. The magistrate still called and adjourned Assemblies as he liked; he alone could put proposals before them; and he controlled debate and amendment.

## GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

THE ASSEMBLIES - The Assemblies by curias, by centuries, and by tribes continued to exist side by side; but the center of gravity had shifted again, - as once before from the curias to the centuries, so now from the centuries to the tribes. The political function of the Curiate Assembly had become purely formal in very early times. The Centuriate Assembly continued to elect consuls, censors, and praetors; but its law-making power and the choice of all other officers



had passed to the Assembly of Tribes. Of course, as this change took place, the rich citizens took their place in this Assembly.

(A descendant of an old patrician family now belonged to all three Assemblies; a plebeian belonged to the Assembly of Centuries and to the Assembly of Tribes.)

Of course, as this change took place the rich citizens took their place in the Assembly; but in deciding the vote of a tribe, each member, rich or poor, counted like any other member.

C 265

## GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

A NEW ARISTOCRACY APPEARED composed of descendants of curule officers. Each such official, by law, transmitted to his descendants the right to keep upon the walls of their living rooms the wax masks of ancestors, and to carry them in a public procession at the funeral of a member of the family. A chief part of such a funeral was an oration commemorating the virtues and deeds of the ancestors, whose images were present. Families with this privilege were

called nobles (nobiles).

Before the year 300 BC, the nobles began to be jealous of the admission of "new men" to their ranks; and their united influence soon controlled nearly all curule elections in favor of some member of their own order. To make this easier, they secured a law fixing the order in which these offices could be attained. No one could be elected AEDILE until he had held the quaestorship, nor praetor till he had been Aedile, nor consul till he had been praetor. Then the nobles had to watch the elections only of the first line (rank) of officers. By controlling these, they could control admission to their order.

THUS, ALL THE NOBLES BECAME PRACTICALLY AN HEREDITARY OLIGARCHY OF A FEW HUNDRED FAMILIES. And since senators had to be appointed from those who had held curule office, each "noble" family was sure to have a senator among its near relatives, if not in its own home. "Nobles" became equivalent to the SENATORIAL ORDER.



C265

## GOVERNMENT OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

**CHANGES IN THE ASSEMBLIES** - During the century between the LICINIAN LAWS and its war with Pyrrhus, three or four legal reforms were adopted, to make the political assemblies more powerful and more democratic.

In 312 BC, a reforming Censor, Appius Claudius, enrolled the landless citizens in the tribes. Up to this time, only landholders had had a voice there. Appius carried this extension of the franchise unconstitutionally, in defiance of the veto of his colleague. The aristocratic party did not venture

to undo the act, but they did modify it: a few years later another census put all the landless class into the 4 city tribes alone, so that the city poor might not outvote the rural landowners.

(b) About the same time a change took place in the Centuriate Assembly, by which each of the five classes (knights, free class) secured an equal voice, and wealth lost most of its supremacy.

(c) In 287 BC, after some discussion and a threatened secession, the HORSTENSAN law took from the Senate its veto upon the plebiscites of the tribes. Somewhat earlier the Senate had lost all veto over the elections in the centuriate.

These changes made Rome a democracy, in law; but in practice they were more than counterbalanced by the way in which the nobles controlled the Senate and the curule offices.

265BC

First contact of the Romans  
with Greek medicine  
through prisoners of war.



C 265 BC

REORGANIZATION OF ROMAN  
ARMY ①

Another important change in Roman institutions during the wars for conquest of Italy was the reorganization of the army. Under the later kings the old Homeric type of fighting carried on by nobles on horseback as in choroi, was given up and dependence was placed on the phalanx of heavy-armed infantry. We have seen that the front lines of the massed formation were composed of the upper centuries in the centuriate assembly - those not able to equip themselves with the needed armor and weapons at their own expense. But it became necessary to call to active service

more and more citizens of the lower centuries, and this involved heavy sacrifices for these poorer men, although the introduction of pay at the siege of the Veii made the burden easier. At some time, however, probably during the SAMNITE WARS, it became evident that the army badly needed reorganization, for although the massed phalanx was very effective on level ground, on rough ground it was likely to be broken and the enemy given a good chance to win.

An Athenian general discovered this fact in the Peloponnesian war and armed part of his troops more lightly so they might win on rough ground. The Romans solved

this problem by breaking up their massed infantry into legions of about 4,000 heavy-armed soldiers divided into maniples (handfuls) of 120 men. Each of these maniples could manoeuvre independently (e.g. maniple comprised two centuries, this no longer had any numerical meaning but was simply a military unit.) Such small masses could keep their formation fairly well even on rough ground. Ordinarily they fought in three lines arranged in checker board formation. There was a gap between the maniples on the first line, behind which each maniple of the second line took its position.

A third line of examples are held in reserve for emergencies. These comprised the most experienced soldiers. Instead of the long thrusting spear, the Romans adopted the pila or javelin for throwing. And they used a large oblong shield. The Roman method of fighting now was for the soldiers to hurl their javelin at the enemy and then charge forward, using their short two-edged swords for hand-to-hand fighting.

All the Roman citizens having a moderate amount of property were liable to be called for army service between the ages of 17 and 46. In modern states without compulsory universal

they could not be overwhelmed by a surprise attack, and they could wait for favorable conditions before fighting. In enemy territory the camp gave them a tremendous advantage.

At home the individual citizen was nothing - the state was everything. Except in rare instances, the Roman people as well as their soldiers were unwaveringly loyal no matter what disaster might occur. Such devoted loyalty to their state, such respect for legal authority, and such bulldog tenacity have seldom been found in history. It is no wonder that the Romans won Italy.

C265 CC

ROMAN ARMY

③ ③

military service this would mean that an ordinary levy of troops would be quite untrained and inexperienced and therefore of little value for immediate war; but in ancient times every young man underwent considerable physical and military training as a part of his education. Even at Athens where great dependence was placed on the fleet, every citizen had to be trained for the war that might come at any time. A Roman army might seem to be untrained, but it was not just a body of militiamen. Rome was engaged in so many wars in so many wars that the ordinary

citizen was certain to be called for service several times in his twenties, and any levy of citizens was sure to include a great many experienced soldiers. The Army was commanded by the consuls. They might not necessarily be good generals but at least they had had experience, for a man could not stand for the consulship until he had ten campaigns to his credit. The lesser officers, the military tribunes, were also experienced soldiers. Moreover, in war emergencies the Roman voters seldom chose a man like CLEON, the Athenian demagogue; on the contrary, they were careful to elect men of ample experience and established reputation for sagacity and valor.

Above all, the Roman discipline was extraordinarily severe. The consul had absolute power over his soldiers and did not hesitate to inflict the death penalty for disobedience, neglect of duty, or cowardice - in several cases a Roman consul ordered his own son to execution for breach of discipline. Every night, no matter how far they had marched, the Roman soldiers built themselves a fortified camp with a ditch and stakeade surrounding it. The stakes for which they carried with them on the march. In this camp



265 BC

Rome

A law enacted 265 BC  
provided that no one  
should be elected  
Censor a second time.

365BC

Roman Policies  
vs Conquered Peoples  
of Italy

Half citizens, who were numerous, were rather widely scattered. Their cities were called municipia and many of them had their own municipal government. Their local autonomy did much to make them satisfied members of the Roman state. By 265 B.C. an area of about 10,000 square miles was occupied by Roman citizens.

Nearest of the Italians to the Romans in kinship

their share of war booty. The cities had their own government and their local customs were free from Roman interference. Their citizens enjoyed the right to do business at home and most of them could marry at home. It is clear from this short description that Rome controlled the people of Italy most tactfully, leaving each community pretty well to its own devices provided its light obligations to Rome were fulfilled.

There was no rigid system to which all had to conform in detail. Moreover, citizens of the various

By 265 BC

An area of about 10,000 square miles  
was occupied by Roman citizens.

265BC

CARTHAGE THE NATURAL RIVAL OF ROME IN THE WEST.

Carthage and Rome had been allied, just before, against Pyrrhus, their common enemy. But that gallant adventurer had seen that they were natural rivals; and, as he abandoned the West, he exclaimed longingly, "How fair a battlefield we ~~are~~ are leaving for the Romans and Carthaginians!" In less than 10 yrs the hundred-yr conflict began.

Carthage was an ancient Phoenician colony, on the finest harbor in North Africa. Her government,

against Rome.

Hence, the civilization of Egypt was of an Oriental type. Her religion was the cruel and licentious worship of the Phœnician Baal and Astarte. Her army was a melting mass of mercenaries. And though, like the northern Phœnician state, she scattered seeds of a material culture, like them, also, she showed no power of assimilating inferior nations. The conquests of Rome were to be lamented; but 6 centuries of Roman rule had left the Barbarians of Africa wholly outside Latinized society.



c 265-238BC

Indian Chronologists

The inscriptions of the Buddhist King  
AŚOKA (c 265-238BC) give the 1<sup>st</sup>  
epigraphical evidence of the mode  
of reckoning from a king's consecration  
(abhiseka).

265BC

## CARTHAGE & ROME

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE POLITICAL SYSTEMS of the two rivals is equally striking. Even her nearest and best subjects Carthage kept in virtual slavery.

Says Mommsen (History of Rome)

"Carthage despatched her overseers everywhere, and loaded even the old Phoenician cities with a heavy tribute, while her subject tribes were practically treated as state slaves. In this way there was not in the compass of the Carthagino-African state a single community, with the exception of Utica,

265 BC, 264 BC

## FIRST PUNIC WAR

Began in Sicily. HIERO II, ruler of Syracuse had pressed the Mamertines ("Sons of Mars"). one faction of Mamertines appealed to Carthage for help and the other appealed to Rome. The Senate referred the question to the people (Both Carthage & Syracuse were allies of Rome.) The people voted promptly to send troops and in 264 BC, Roman legions for the first time crossed the sea. The war with Carthage that followed is known as the FIRST PUNIC WAR.

STRENGTH - Carthage was mistress of an empire huge but scattered and heterogeneous. Rome was the head of a small but compact nationality. Each state contained, or ruled over, about 5,000,000 people. The strength of Carthage lay in her wealth and in her navy. Her weak points were: the jealousy felt by the ruling families at home toward their own successful generals; the difficulty of dealing with her mercenaries; the danger of revolt among her Libyan subjects; and the fact that an invading army, after one victory, would find no resistance outside her walls, since her jealousy had leveled the defense of her tributary towns in Africa. Rome was strong in patriotism & vigor of her people in discipline of her legions, and in the fidelity of its allies. Her weakness lay in the total lack of a navy and in the want of a better military system than the one of annually changing soldiers and short-term soldiers.

265 BC

HIERO II

DURANT

The Senate won Hiero of Syracuse to Rome's side, and thereby assured supplies for Roman troops in Sicily. It organized the nation with wisdom and resolution, and led it to victory through almost overwhelming disasters.

265 BC

DURANT

Rome decided that at whatever cost she must keep the Carthaginians from so near and strategic a port. A fleet was fitted out and despatched under CAIUS CLAUDIUS to rescue the AMERITINES. But there had meanwhile been persuasion by the Carthaginians to withdraw their request for Roman aid & a message from them



As this report reached CLAUDIUS at  
RHEGIUM. Ignoring it, he crossed  
the strait, invited the Carthaginian commander  
to a conference, imprisoned him, and  
sent word to the Carthaginian Army that he  
would be killed if they resisted. The  
mercenaries welcomed so gallant an  
excuse for avoiding the legions and  
MESSANA fell to Rome.